

**FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**June 19, 2017 - 1:30 PM**  
**STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**  
***Edgehill Training Room/DPH, Dover***

**PRESENT**

Daniese McMullin-Powell, Vice-Chair; Gene Aucott, Easter Seals; Deb Bradl, DVI; Sonya Dyer, Dover AFB; Brian Hartman, DLP/CLASI; Terri Hancharick, EPIC; Linda Heller, HLADE; Jocelyn Langrehr, DOL/DVR; Karen McGloughlin, DPH; Dale Matueseovich, DOE; Jim Miller, Polio/Post-Polio Support Group (via phone); Pat Maichle, DDC; Ann Phillips, Delaware Family Voices/Parent; Loretta Sarro, DOL/DVR DODHH; Lloyd Schmitz, Council of the Blind; Wendy Strauss, GACEC; Todd Webb, DelDOT-ADA; John McNeal, Staff; Amber Rivard, Support Staff; Dee Rivard, Support Staff and Jo Singles, Support Staff.

**GUESTS**

Victoria Counihan, DOJ/AG  
Carin Hannorford, HLADE  
Andy Kloefer, DVI  
Michelle Morin, Office of Supplier Diversity  
William Powell  
Jim Steele, National Federation for the Blind in Delaware  
Devon Taylor

**Interpreters:** Ruth Fisher and Deb Monhollan

**CALL TO ORDER**

Daniese called the meeting to order at 1:38 pm. Everyone introduced themselves.

**ADDITION OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

- Delaware Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Low-Vision Social Services Provider Program Proposal (DCSSP)
- Deaf & Deaf Blind Services & Issues - HLADE

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Lloyd made a motion to approve the May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes and Brian seconded the motion. The May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

**BUSINESS**

**VISTA Grant for Deaf and Deaf/Blind Students & Adults**

Linda introduced Andy Kloefer, Chief Policy Administrator for the Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI) to present information on a grant that was written in response to a meeting with the Delaware School for the Deaf in December, 2016 with deaf and deaf/blind community representatives regarding important issues. Andy spoke about people asking how services for the blind can be integrated and services for the hard of hearing and/or deaf. As a result of the meeting, they applied for a grant through

Corporation for National & Community Services (CNCS) in the form of a VISTA Grant. The VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) grant is a one-to-three year project where three volunteers are recruited (one for each County) and they in turn recruit local volunteers to focus on the project's goals and objectives. He stated the main purpose of a VISTA grant is to alleviate current and future poverty. There is no budget or specified time frame with this grant. VISTA volunteers are paid a living allowance through CNCS. Volunteers get \$5,800 stipend for college at the end of the grant year. Andy stated that an initial concept paper was written and submitted to the feds and it was accepted and they were then invited to apply for the grant. The grant will be submitted by the end of July and they will start recruiting by the end of August. The project will be starting in the fall and late spring.

They will be partnering with Delaware School for the Deaf, recruiting interpreters, resources within DVI, Division for Vocation Rehabilitation, the State Office of Volunteerism, churches, community organizations, nonprofit agencies and colleges. The focus will be on the student population and volunteers from an education background. All of these partners will work with the students to give them tools to be successful in life. They will also focus on the adult population who are already facing barriers. Ann suggested reaching out to Delaware Family Hands & Voices and will send contact information to Linda. Andy stated that he is open to any partnerships. Linda asked Andy to include SCPD and other partners as a think tank when writing the grant. Andy will send a draft of the grant to Linda to share for input, but stated that they are on a tight time frame. Michelle asked about a pipeline to employment. Andy stated that the focus is not to find jobs for people, but help the students and adults to access services, obtain training and education to become employed. Michelle spoke about the State having seven (7) set aside contracts and the awarded vendors have to have 75 percent of their employees are persons with disabilities. She offered to connect with Andy if he applies for a grant that looks for employment as a next step. Daniese thanked Andy for his presentation.

### **Custie Award Format Update**

Daniese referred to Nick's revised version of the Custie Award Process (handout dated June 4, 2017). John spoke about the short timeline and the need to fine tune the process. Pat expressed concern on the amount of writing needed, but added that she appreciated the intent of the proposed process.

Brian had three observations:

- Page 1 – Purpose – The Custie should recognize major achievements arising from **sustained** ....., but the last sentence says: The lifetime award should recognized sustained contributions over a long period of time. He recommended taking out “sustained” in the Purpose section in order to be consistent.
- Page 2 – Awards Committee – He noted that there are so many committees that are hard to staff and that SCPD staff could do the outreach and marketing part. John added that this would be more efficient.
- Page 3 (top) – The emphasis is not on the person, but the achievement and rank order them objectively. He gave several examples of how this would not work and added that this needs to be reviewed and figured out.

After discussion, Lloyd made a motion was made to use the current format for this year. Wendy seconded the motion and no one abstained or opposed the motion. Motion carried. There will be more discussion in September on Nick's proposal and then a decision will be forthcoming. Everyone wanted to thank Nick and Susan for all their effort on the proposal.

## **HB 160 Update**

John stated that the proposed H.B. 160 was surprisingly voted Out of Committee. He noted that the analysis that went to the legislators from SCPD did not endorse or opposed the proposed legislation. He also spoke about several telephone calls from Council members who were not opposed to the legislation, but their voices were not being heard or they were not willing to provide their voices. John wants to make sure that he provides the legislature with the full Council's perspective. John asked for feedback on how to proceed. Pat commented that we vote on the issue, not the actual legislation. Daniese commented that in 2015, a vote was taken that the Council opposed the concept of the bill and that we had a position paper on the subject. Brian stated that John, Pat, Daniese and he met with Representative Baumbach and reviewed the 27 observations that were submitted in the analysis. The proposed legislation was to be amended after that, but we have not yet seen the amendment. Brian noted that SCPD enabling legislation allows us to give input to the legislators. Daniese clarified that the legislation has two stipulations: that the person is diagnosed with a terminal illness and has less than six months; and also medical confirmation by a second physician.

Michelle introduced her guest Devon Taylor, a graduate student, who has research this topic nationally for her thesis. Devon spoke about the research she has done. She commented that 7 out of 10 Americans support some form of death with dignity bill. She stated that the 6 states that passed death with dignity bills have a similar egalitarianism world view. Delaware and Pennsylvania does not. Delaware has a much more hierarchist communitarianism world view, which is opposite of the states that have death with dignity legislation. She commented that the bill needs to be refrain the message to appeal to our cultural world views of the state. She will be writing to policymakers on how to make progress in states like Delaware or Pennsylvania. She wants to get feedback from the Council and make sure they are taking a full approach when presenting such a bill. Michelle added that Devon will be interviewing John as Director of ADA for inclusion in her white paper so that disabilities are part of the conversation. John commented that the disability related issues regarding this bill extend far and beyond the ADA, for example, self-administering the medicine, which would discriminate against persons with disabilities. Daniese asked Devon if she researched the 10 states that vetoed against the legislation; Devon stated that she had not. Devon will provide her contact information to Jo for distribution. Daniese commented that in the interest of fairness, we should have other resources of information available, for example, from Compassionate Choices (pro-suicide) and Not Dead Yet (against suicide). Daniese noted that every disability advocacy group that has taken a position has been opposed to assisted suicide. No disability advocacy groups have supported this type of legislation and listed the reasons.

After discussion, Lloyd made a motion for the Council to oppose the concept of the legislation (17 voting members were present and 10 voting members were not present; Jim could not vote because he participated by phone). Terri seconded the motion. After several vote counts, the final vote was 11 members approved the motion, 0 abstained and 5 opposed. The motion carried.

## **SCPD Membership**

John spoke about it being imperative that all agencies listed in the Delaware Code are attending meetings or sending a designee (and notifying us in writing) to ensure that we have a quorum. Michelle commented that there is one Council that is allowed to have voting without having to be physically present. She recommended checking with the Office of Boards & Commissions. Victoria stated that the State Use Law Commission has it in their statute that members can vote by phone or in person. SCPD would have to make a change by statutory amendment. Video conferencing is allowed. Anthony commented that with the limited technology, it would not be a good idea to allow voting by telephone because someone may not have a good understanding of what is happening at the meeting.

It was noted that DelDOT has good audio equipment. Brian commented that these State activities/meetings are covered by Title II of the ADA, and State law is overridden by the ADA law, including reasonable accommodations. He spoke about presenting legislators with a bill regarding exceptions based on the ADA. John will have discussion on this topic as part of the discussion about the State's ADA obligation. Daniese stated that phone courtesy should include people speaking in the room to say their name first so the callers know whom is speaking. John stated that changing the statute could be a topic for the September Council meeting. Brian added that if we decide to draft legislation about reasonable accommodations being included, we need to also mention reasonable accommodations regarding meeting locations.

### **Summer Wrap-Up Discussion – Looking Ahead**

As discussed earlier, changing the statute to allow for reasonable accommodations will be one of the topics discussed at the September meeting. This legislation could include all Councils, Boards and Commissions. Lloyd suggested that a bonus in the presentation is that it would encourage persons with disabilities to participate on the Boards and Commissions. John noted that opening it up for 20 percent of the population (1 in 5 people have a disability) to participate is a good argument. Another topic for the September meeting will be continued discussion on the Custie Award process. He will send a thank you to Nick and Susan for their efforts.

John spoke briefly about the upcoming Annual SCPD Luncheon. He asked for ideas of speakers that we have not included in the past. DelDOT was suggested. Planning will occur over the summer. Brian stated that one of the main reasons to have DHSS Directors present at the SCPD Luncheon was to give SCPD members an opportunity to obtain information to prepare for testimony at the OMB Hearings in November. Michelle spoke about two bills before the legislature that would create a State Human Resources Cabinet. She suggested that if the bills pass, it would be a good idea that the new Cabinet Secretary be part of Luncheon agenda. John added that if we add people to the agenda, we will have to shorten the presentations. Pat commented that Secretary Walker may present differently than Secretary Landgraf. It was noted that it is important to have Division Directors provide presentations. Karen commented that it would be good to hear Secretary Walker's position on initiatives started by the previous Secretary (Rita Landgraf), for example, the progress of inclusion as part of the DHSS Contracts. Daniese suggested that Housing should also be included.

### **Delaware Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Low-Vision Social Services Provider Program Proposal (DCSSP)**

Linda spoke about the Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Low-vision Social Services Provider Program Proposal (DCSSP).

Linda stated that the issues for this population are getting more critical. She stated that parents and advocate came to the HLADE (Hearing Loss Association of Delaware) to ask for assistance. They are in the beginning stages of planning major advocacy for this most underserved population and who have the greatest needs. Due to communication issues, this group has difficulty advocating for themselves. Linda commented that there needs to be some basic inclusion in the community.

One of the issues is that parents are aging and there is no one available to get the person out of the home so many of these folks have not been out of their homes for many years. There is also a lack of knowledge on how to access services because there is no "home" for deaf/blind people. Services are very difficult to access on the DHSS website. Linda added that other states have an entire agency to work with this population. Another issue is housing. Deaf people in group homes and there is no one there that can sign. Linda has set up a meeting with DVI (Division for the Visually Impaired). A

deaf/blind person wrote her story (handout) and made a presentation to DVI in December 2016 (handout). They asked DVI to do a pilot social support program for deaf/blind people. Part of this program is that volunteers or paid staff would take people out into the community for medical appointments, visits to the mall, etc. There is a similar type of program in Pennsylvania and it is successful and continues to grow. Statistics from the National Federation for the Blind show that there are 77 deaf/blind people in Delaware.

Another learning opportunity for deaf/blind people & their families or support people attend a Tactile Carnival. Linda visited one in West Chester, Pennsylvania and explained how it works. She suggested that the CDS (Center for Disability Studies) could be involved and she would like to bring this to Delaware. The program is not expensive. There has been further discussions with Scott Stoffel and a grant has been written and they are working with the Delaware School for the Deaf (DSD). Linda commented that the HLADE is also working on improving deaf and hard of hearing services in Delaware since Delaware is backward compared to other states. HLADE is happy to lead these efforts in conjunction with additional partners. Linda can be contacted at [hlade@comcast.net](mailto:hlade@comcast.net) for additional questions or suggestions. Lloyd asked if DVI has offered the deaf/blind population braille education. Linda stated that some people have approached her that have had the opportunity to learn braille. Lloyd added that there are electronic devices with refreshable braille that hook up to computers and give people access to the internet, etc. Equipment can be purchased through Education or Rehabilitation funds. Linda mentioned another program called "I Connect" and there has been difficulty getting deaf/blind people to sign up. She referred several people to this program, but their income was too high to get the program unless they paid out of pocket. This has been a barrier for some families. She refers them to DTI for additional funding sources. Linda stated that they are looking at basic life issues, with communication being a major barrier. The goal is to improve the quality of life for deaf/blind and deaf people. Pat commented that there is a deaf/blind group for students and Linda might also want to get them involved. Linda commented that Andy will be working with the DSD. One of the big issues is that there is no one agency responsible for deaf/blind people. They are also working with the Independent Living, Inc. agencies. Todd asked about accessibility issues on the State agency websites. Linda added that is more about accessing services on the website.

Karen added that DHSS is trying to make the pages more understandable for people to navigate. Linda stated that Secretary Walker is aware of this issue. Loretta commented that she is happy to see this issue being worked on. She has seen students who graduate and then have difficulty navigating the adult world. She would like to see DSD build resources for parents of students when leaving school. She said that the State website only has one paragraph for deaf and hard of hearing and deaf/blind consumers. It is too broad and too limited. It should cover lifetime—from 0 onward. Loretta stated that DVR has counselors that sign for deaf and hard of hearing people and DVI has independent services and vocational rehabilitation services, but they do not have the staff to work with deaf/blind individuals. Linda stated that she appreciated Loretta's input and hopes that she will be at further meetings on the issues. Linda stated that DVI has agreed to bring the Tactile Carnival to Delaware. She will be working with them. Dee mentioned that the National Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has talking books and they are free. Deb Bradl said that she will reach out to Linda regarding underserved populations in Delaware. She would like to coordinate this into the comprehensive statewide needs assessment to keep it in the forefront and continuously worked on in the next few years. Karen asked Loretta if students have connections to help them move forward in their next steps after school. Loretta stated that it depends on the staff and instructors at any given time. Some instructors have different views for juniors and seniors, but she has never heard of any resources for deaf/blind students leaving school. Karen commented that it should be part of the school's system and not dependent on a certain instructor. Dale added that DOE and DVR has done joint training at DSD around transitioning. Lloyd stated that the National Federation of the Blind has a program called "Newslite" which gives visually impaired people and people with print disabilities the

opportunity to access local and national publications, including newspaper, magazines, etc. The deaf/blind people would qualify for this and additional information can be found by contacting DVI directly. Lloyd clarified that access includes on a mobile device, computer or telephone. Also, a braille terminal can be used.

**Other Business**

None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Lloyd made a motion to adjourn. Motion approved. The meeting adjourned at 3:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Singles  
Administrative Specialist

SCPD/min/jun17